



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

# American Anthropologist

NEW SERIES

---

---

VOL. 17

APRIL-JUNE, 1915

No. 2

---

---

## EXO GAM Y AND THE CLASSIFICATORY SYSTEMS OF RELATIONSHIP<sup>1</sup>

By ROBERT H. LOWIE

SOME connection between exogamy and primitive relationship terminologies has been recognized for a long time. Morgan noted that among the Iroquois all clan members were brothers and sisters as if children of the same mother.<sup>2</sup> And though in his theoretical treatment of the subject he does not derive the classificatory system as a whole from the exogamous principle, he does attribute the change from the older Malayan to the later and more common Turanian form of the system to punaluan marriage as a predecessor of the institution of exogamy and to exogamy itself.<sup>3</sup> Tylor, to my knowledge, was the first to view exogamy and the classificatory system as but "two sides of one institution."<sup>4</sup> More recently both Frazer<sup>5</sup> and Rivers<sup>6</sup> discovered the origin of the classificatory system in "a social structure which has the exogamous social group as its essential unit," both conceiving this group as

---

<sup>1</sup> Read before the American Anthropological Association at Philadelphia.

<sup>2</sup> *League of the Ho-dé-no-sau-nee or Iroquois*, Book 1, chapter 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ancient Society*, Book 3, chapters 1-3.

<sup>4</sup> "On a Method of Investigating the Development of Institutions, Applied to Laws of Marriage and Descent," *Journal Anthropological Institute*, xviii (1889), pp. 245-269, especially, p. 261 et seq.

<sup>5</sup> *Totemism and Exogamy*, IV, p. 114.

<sup>6</sup> "On the Origin of the Classificatory System of Relationships" in *Anthropological Essays presented to Edward Burnett Tylor*, pp. 309-323; *Kinship and Social Organisation*, p. 70 et seq. The latter is an astonishingly stimulating contribution to the whole subject of kinship nomenclature.

an exogamous moiety, which indeed had already figured prominently in Tylor's essay.

It will be best to put this theory in somewhat more concrete form. Among the Iroquois, Morgan noted that a single term was applied to the maternal grandmother and her sisters; to the mother and her sisters; to the father and his brothers; and so forth. On the other hand, distinct terms were applied to the father's and to the mother's brother, to the father's and to the mother's sister.<sup>1</sup> All these facts are readily formulated by deriving the classification from the exogamous groups extant among the Iroquois: those relatives distinguished in our own nomenclature and not distinguished in that of the Iroquois are members of the same exogamous division, while those not distinguished by us and separated by the Iroquois are necessarily members of different divisions. From this point of view the objection otherwise plausibly urged against denying the name "classificatory" to our own system since it, also, ranges certain relatives in *classes*, becomes impossible. It is no longer a question, whether our terms "uncle," "aunt," or "cousin" are "classificatory" in a purely etymological sense of the term; nor whether the classificatory principle is quantitatively more important in certain primitive systems than in our own.<sup>2</sup> The point at issue is the *basis* of the classification, and having regard to this there obviously exists a real difference between a system that classifies, say, cousins from both the father's and the mother's side under a common term and a system that rigorously divides relatives of the paternal and the maternal line on the ground of their different clan or gentile affiliations. Thus, the Tylor-Rivers theory, on the one hand, briefly summarizes and makes intelligible certain modes of classification operative in many primitive systems that otherwise might seem purely capricious; and, moreover, it furnishes at last a logical basis for separating our civilized system from that of the primitive peoples concerned.

I am profoundly impressed with the influence of the exogamous principle on primitive kinship nomenclature, but I feel strongly that the principle has not yet been formulated with adequate pre-

---

<sup>1</sup> *League*, l. c.

<sup>2</sup> Rivers, *Kinship and Social Organisation*, p. 2.

cision and due regard to coordinate principles of a different type. It seems to me that most writers on the subject suffer from the familiar disease of conceptual realism: the concept "classificatory system" is for them a sort of Platonic idea in the essence of which particular systems of this type somehow participate.

Even Dr Rivers cannot be freed from this charge. In practice he does not treat classificatory systems as fully determined by the clan or gentile factor, but smuggles in additional elements that go hand in hand with exogamy in moulding relationship nomenclature. Most important among these is the principle, so strongly emphasized by Cunow, that members of the same generation are classed together and apart from other generations. Dr Rivers regards this as so general a feature of "classificatory" systems that departures from the rule at once elicit from him special hypotheses.<sup>1</sup> Again, in a concrete illustration of his theory, he has it that in tribes possessing a classificatory system a person will apply a single term to all the members of his father's clan *of the same generation as his father*. I am certainly in favor of considering clan, generation, and other causes as jointly operative in the development of kinship nomenclature, but if this method is accepted an attempt must be made to indicate the interaction of these several principles. The fact is that the mode of interaction for the two factors that are here taken into account *varies*. In some cases, Dr Rivers's statement, that members of the same clan (or gens) *and* generation are united, holds. But in other cases, for example among the Tewa, Crow, Hidatsa, and Tlingit, the exogamous principle predominates and overrides the generation category. Here, then, is an empirical problem, to be settled for every people and only obscured by the characterization of classificatory systems generally as "clan" systems; to wit, the problem how the exogamous group is coordinated with other principles of classification.

The fact that Dr Rivers has not attempted to evaluate the several factors that together determine primitive relationship terminology has led him into the curious position of underestimating in practice the very factor that occupies the dominant position

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 29-31.

in his theory. Again and again he invokes special social usages to account for "relatively small variations of the classificatory system" that are at once explained by the prepotency of the exogamous principle. For example, he cites the East Indian term *bahu*, which is applied to the son's wife, the wife, and the mother; and in explanation of this classification he assumes a one-time form of polyandry in which a man and his son had a wife in common.<sup>1</sup> This assumption is *de trop* because with a dual organization and paternal descent, I and my son belong to my father's moiety, while my mother, my wife, and my son's wife must belong to the complementary moiety; hence, *bahu* may simply connote females of that exogamous group. Again, Dr Rivers cites the Pawnee use of one term for the wife and the wife of the mother's brother, explaining this by a special form of marriage.<sup>2</sup> But, given a dual organization with maternal descent, I and my mother's brother are members of the same moiety, while my wife and his wife are fellow-members of the complementary moiety. Finally, the confusion of generations in the Banks Islands<sup>3</sup> requires no special hypothesis. With maternal descent, my father's sister's son is classed with my father because, as among the Tewa of Hano, he is my father's clansman. My mother's brother's children are classed with my children because my mother's brother, being my clansman, is my brother; and because two brothers regard each other's children as their own. Thus, in the first confusion of generations the clan principle alone has been operative; in the second case, the clan principle has established a relationship from which a really non-existent distinction of generation is the logical derivative.

Thus, on the one hand, the exogamous theory does not suffice to explain the "classificatory" systems in their totality; on the other hand, it eliminates certain auxiliary hypotheses considered necessary by the most eminent of its advocates. Obviously, there is something wrong with the formulation of the theory.

The solution of the difficulty lies implicitly in the original and

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 53-54.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 28 et seq.

invaluable portion of Professor Kroeber's essay on the subject<sup>1</sup>—the very part ignored or misunderstood by his critics—where he lists the categories in which the North American Indians have ranged relatives, and by the quantitative importance of each of which a given system may be defined. Among these categories is that of distinguishing lineal and collateral relatives,—the father from the father's brother, the mother from the mother's sister, the brother from the cousin. When we turn to Morgan's earliest description of what he afterwards took for the starting-point of his definition of the classificatory type of system,<sup>2</sup> we find that what impressed him above all was the abeyance of the rule that collateral shall be distinguished from lineal relatives. This, then, forms the core of Morgan's concept, however obscured by adherent features that are logically quite unrelated. And from this point of view the Tylor-Rivers theory assumes a different aspect. Exogamy cannot explain why generations are so generally distinguished; it cannot explain the frequent differences between elder and younger *Geschwister*, or the frequent distinction between vocative and non-vocative forms; it cannot explain a hundred and one features of classificatory systems so-called. But it does explain why lineal and collateral lines of kinship are merged in the particular way characteristic of the Iroquois, Ojibwa, and many other primitive systems conforming to Morgan's Turanian type. Thus purged, the theory must now be subjected to empirical verification.

It might appear at first sight that such an empirical verification has already been given by Dr Rivers with regard to Oceania, though this, of course, would not render it unnecessary to collect corroborative evidence from other regions. However, Dr Rivers has in reality made a different point. In Oceania he is not dealing with classificatory and non-classificatory systems, but merely with the two forms of the classificatory system,—the Hawaiian and the Turanian. In both forms lineal and collateral relationship are merged, but in the Hawaiian nomenclature the terms are even more inclusive, no distinction being drawn between relatives of the

<sup>1</sup> "Classificatory Systems of Relationship," *Journal Royal Anthropol. Inst.*, 1909, XXXIX, p. 77 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> *League*, Book 1, chapter 4.

maternal and the paternal side. Setting out with his theory and these two forms of the classificatory system before him, Dr Rivers undertakes to show how the Hawaiian form could have developed from the Turanian form which alone follows logically from the exogamous principle. He finds that where the Hawaiian form is most clearly developed, traces of exogamy are lacking, while the highest development of exogamy is accompanied by a Turanian form of kinship system. An indefinite number of intermediate social organizations are accompanied, we are told, by intermediate kinship terminologies. The general interpretation of the phenomena offered is that a progressive change has occurred from the Turanian to the Hawaiian form, going hand in hand with the substitution of non-exogamous marriage regulations for regulation by exogamous divisions.<sup>1</sup>

This is obviously not testing the theory that the classificatory system is a function of exogamy, but merely interpreting by a special historical hypothesis the occurrence of an aberrant type of classificatory system, on the supposition that the theory is already established. Granting that the hypothesis correctly represents the course of development in Oceania, we cannot assume that exogamy everywhere represents an older condition, and indeed in North America the evidence points in the opposite direction.<sup>2</sup> Without assuming the priority of either the exogamous or the loose social organization, we can test the Tylor-Rivers theory by grouping together exogamous tribes, on the one hand, and non-exogamous tribes, on the other hand, and comparing the corresponding kinship terminologies. North America, where the geographical distribution of types of organization is fairly well determined, offers a favorable field for such an inquiry.

In the first place, there can be little doubt that the custom of identifying in nomenclature lineal and collateral relatives is very largely coextensive with the exogamous practice. It is found in at least three of the four main exogamous areas of the continent,—east of the Mississippi, among the southern Siouan and northwestern

<sup>1</sup> *Kinship and Social Organisation*, p. 65 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> See the present writer's "Social Organization," *American Journal of Sociology*, 1914, pp. 68-97.

Plains tribes, and on the Northwest coast. For the Southwest satisfactory data seem to be lacking except for the Tewa,<sup>1</sup> where conditions are markedly anomalous. Both among the patrilineally organized Tewa of New Mexico and the matrilineal Tewa of Hano, Arizona, there are distinct terms for father's brother and father, although the term for "father" is "applied loosely to father, elder brother, father's brother, or other relatives older than self" in New Mexico,<sup>2</sup> and at Hano to all father's clansmen, including of course his own brothers.<sup>3</sup> For the present purpose it is important to note that at Hano it is the distinct term for "father's brother" that seems to be the older mode of designation, now rendered obsolescent by the term for "father."<sup>4</sup> Similarly, in both branches of the Tewa, the mother's sister is carefully distinguished from the mother; in Hano, we are told emphatically, a mother's sister is never addressed as mother; and conversely we find that a woman does not address her sister's children like her own children but by a reciprocal term with diminutive suffix.<sup>5</sup> In New Mexico there is a further invasion of the exogamous principle inasmuch as no distinction is drawn between paternal and maternal uncles and aunts respectively.<sup>6</sup>

For the Tewa, then, the hypothetical correlation does not hold. In the New Mexican division of the people the grouping of relatives has been affected only to a very slight degree by the gentile organization. At Hano the effect of the corresponding clan organization has been greater, for among other extensions, the word for "child" is applied by a male to any of his clansmen's children and a single term embraces all the speaker's clansmen other than his own brothers. Nevertheless, even in this pueblo the divergence from the type in the designations for father, mother, and child is so great that we cannot, without doing violence to the facts, describe

<sup>1</sup> Harrington, "Tewa Relationship Terms," *American Anthropologist*, 1912, xiv, pp. 472-498; Freire-Marreco, "Tewa Kinship Terms from the Pueblo of Hano, Arizona," *ibid.*, 1914, xvi, pp. 269-287.

<sup>2</sup> Harrington, *l. c.*, p. 479.

<sup>3</sup> Freire-Marreco, *l. c.*, p. 277.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 278.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 276; Harrington, 488.

<sup>6</sup> Harrington, pp. 487, 488.



the kinship system as a "clan" system. In short, here is a striking instance of exogamy without an exogamous alignment of kindred.<sup>1</sup>

A thoroughgoing explanation of the Tewa anomaly will be possible only when other southwestern systems shall have become known. For the present a few hints must suffice. So far as the Hano people are concerned, it will be well to remember that their present rule of descent, as well as parts of their kinship terminology, may be due to the influence of the surrounding Hopi and their isolation from the other Tewa pueblos. Not the inhabitants of the single village of the Tewa enclave in Hopi territory, as Miss Freire-Marreco seems to suppose, but their New Mexican congeners may use a kinship system approaching the ancient Tewan type. The problem thus narrows down to that of explaining why the patrilineal Tewa use a nomenclature that does not reflect their gentile grouping. Two alternative solutions occur to me. Either the Tewa adopted their present social organization at so recent a period that the innovation has not yet affected their mode of designating relatives. Or they have abandoned an older kinship system and borrowed a new one from some non-exogamous tribe. A third possibility, however distasteful to some minds, must be reckoned with. Though the influence of a clan or gentile organization on kinship terminology seems to be a very general phenomenon, it cannot be accepted as a law of nature. It remains conceivable that a tribe should possess an exogamous social organization that finds little or no expression in the linguistic designation of kindred, just as it is now an established fact that the linguistic grouping of different relatives under the same category does not blind the users of such a terminology to the differences in the relationships.

However this may be, the single exception that has been noted cannot invalidate the empirical rule that there is a considerable correlation between exogamy and the merging of lineal and collateral relatives. Our next question is, what happens to kinship nomenclature among non-exogamous tribes? The most important

---

<sup>1</sup> This is confirmed by Morgan's statement that in Tesuque, the southernmost Tewa pueblo, all cousins alike were addressed as brothers and sisters. *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity*, p. 263.

North American tribes without a clan or gentile organization are the Eskimo, the Mackenzie river, Plateau, and California Indians. Let us rapidly survey representative kinship terminologies of these tribes.

The Eskimo system differs so radically from the characteristic "classificatory" form that even Morgan claimed at best only a remote relationship between the two. The father's brother is distinguished from the father, the mother's sister from the mother, the children of my father's sister and of my mother's sister are designated by a common term, and so forth.<sup>1</sup> For the Mackenzie river district Morgan's informants seem to establish the presence of fairly well-defined exogamous kinship features among these non-exogamous peoples; however, in contravention of such a system cousins are uniformly addressed as brothers and sisters.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the exogamous features may be the result of borrowing from two distinct sources,—the Algonkian tribes to the south, and the Pacific coast population to the west. The striking coincidence of certain Northern Athapascan with Algonkian traits is noted by Morgan himself. Passing to the Salish tribes of the interior of British Columbia, we find a marked departure from the exogamous type of nomenclature. The Coast Salish draw no distinction between cousins on the father's and the mother's side; class together paternal and maternal uncles and aunts, distinguishing them from the parents; and distinguish children from all nephews and nieces. The Bella Coola likewise distinguish uncles and aunts from parents, and class together those of the paternal and those of the maternal line. Among the Shuswap there seem at first sight to be some "classificatory" features inasmuch as nephews are classed with sons, and nieces with daughters; but they are classificatory only in an etymological, not in Dr Rivers's sense of the word, since the brother's and the sister's children are included in the same category. Boas points out that, while the Shuswap distinguish the parents from their brothers and sisters, the term used by boys for uncles

<sup>1</sup> Morgan, *Systems*, pp. 276-277.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 234-340. In Chipewyan, according to Legoff (*Grammaire de la langue montagnaise*, p. 330) a distinction as to father's and mother's side is made when the speaker addresses a cousin of the opposite sex.

coincides with the stem for "father" in other dialects, while that used by girls for aunts approximates the stem for "mother" in other branches of the Salish stock. This fact is of the utmost significance for a study of kinship terminology from a psychologico-linguistic point of view, but has no bearing on the present issue since, even in these instances, the uncles and aunts are not distinguished as to paternal or maternal side. Among the Okanagan this difference is indeed made, but the terms for parents remain distinct. In Kalispel Salish, likewise, the mother's sister is not confounded with the mother in nomenclature, nor the father's brother with the father; the terms applied by a female to her nephews and nieces are obviously related to those for "son" and "daughter," but again the brother's and sister's children are not distinguished. In short, the non-exogamous Salish tribes have a non-exogamous kinship system.<sup>1</sup> For California published data are meager, but Kroeber's statement that the systems of that area display a remarkable differentiation between the lineal and collateral lines supports the assumption of their non-exogamous character.<sup>2</sup> Finally, we may consider the Shoshonean family for which partial lists by Sapir are available for the Kaibab Paiute and Uintah Ute,<sup>3</sup> as well as unpublished data collected by the present writer among the Wind River Shoshone, White River (?) Ute, Southern Ute, and Northern Paiute, not to forget Morgan's imperfect presentation of the Uncompahgre system. With the single exception of the Wind River Shoshone, the kinship nomenclature of the entire stock is markedly non-exogamous: parents are distinguished from uncles and aunts, children from all nephews and nieces. Among the Kaibab maternal and paternal uncles or aunts are not distinguished, and even among the Wind River Shoshone all cousins are designated by a single term. On the other hand, all the Shoshonean systems are characterized by a feature shared with

---

<sup>1</sup> Boas, "Terms of Relationship of the Salish Languages," *Report of the Sixtieth Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1890 (London, 1891), pp. 688-692.

<sup>2</sup> Kroeber, l. c.

<sup>3</sup> "A Note on Reciprocal Terms of Relationship," *American Anthropologist*, 1913, p. 135 f.

the Tewa,—the frequent use of reciprocal instead of correlative terms for the members of a related pair. We may well pause for a moment to consider the influence of historical accident on the course of theoretical speculation. It has been said by an eminent scientist that if physicists had first studied thermal rather than mechanical phenomena, heat would not have been described as a mode of motion but motion as a mode of heat. Had Morgan begun his researches in the Plateau area, we might have heard less of classificatory and more of reciprocal systems of relationship.

Summing up the result of our sketchy survey, we may say that the Tylor-Rivers theory derives strong corroboration from North American data. Despite some conflicting evidence exogamous kinship systems coincide so largely with an exogamous social organization and are so commonly lacking where exogamy does not obtain that a functional relation between the two must be regarded as more than probable.

We are thus emboldened to pursue our inquiry somewhat more rigorously. Having compared exogamous tribes as a whole with non-exogamous tribes as a whole, we may profitably undertake a more intensive comparison of narrower scope. Since a multiplicity of operative causes must be recognized, it becomes necessary to minimize all other differences save in point of exogamy for the purpose of studying the effect of that factor by itself. This may be done by grouping tribes according to various principles of classification. Within the Algonkian stock, for example, the Cree are reported to lack an exogamous organization. How, then, does the Cree kinship system compare with that of the linguistically and culturally most closely related Algonkian tribes possessing the gentile organization, such as the Ojibwa? From Morgan's data it appears that the kinship terminologies of these tribes agree very closely, both indicating the influence of the exogamous factor.<sup>1</sup> Does, then, the Tylor-Rivers theory break down? Not at all. It must simply be taken in connection with certain concrete facts. That kinship nomenclature may persist after the conditions in which it originated have disappeared, is a principle never urged

---

<sup>1</sup> *Systems*, pp. 204–208.

more emphatically than by Morgan himself. The Cree terminology may therefore well be a survival from a former gentile organization, which is in this instance rather probable from its prevalence in a number of closely allied Algonkian peoples. Again, within the same stock, the Arapaho and the Gros Ventre, sharing the essential traits of Plains culture and speaking mutually intelligible dialects, differ in point of organization; the Arapaho having a non-exogamous and the Gros Ventre a gentile system. If the Arapaho and Gros Ventre kinship systems differed accordingly, the history of the difference might be sought in the influence of the Blackfoot with whom the Gros Ventre have been in intimate contact and from whom they have demonstrably borrowed a number of cultural traits. The Arapaho and Gros Ventre systems, however, are identical, and, except for the designation of cousins, conform to the exogamous type. Shall we be inclined, as in the previous instance, to assume a former condition of Arapaho exogamy?

This raises an important problem. Tylor was so strongly impressed with the correlation of "classificatory" systems and exogamy that he felt warranted in inferring exogamy from the presence of such a system. Nowadays, we shall hardly go quite so far. Granting that a correlation is established, it would still have to be proved that it is a hundred per cent. correlation, that not only do exogamous peoples possess a corresponding kinship system but that no other cause could have produced such a system. The geographical distribution of certain relationship categories demonstrates that these categories, like other cultural traits, may be diffused by borrowing. In the paper already quoted Dr Sapir points out that in the southwestern United States the use of reciprocal terms with diminutive suffixes to designate the junior relative is strangely similar among the Tewa and the Shoshonean tribes. The distribution of reciprocal systems is so definitely localized in North America, without being confined to members of a single linguistic family, as to become intelligible only on the hypothesis of borrowing. This being so, the confusion in language of lineal and collateral relatives may likewise have spread through historical connection,

---

<sup>1</sup> Kroeber, *The Arapaho*, pp. 9 f., 150.

as has already been suggested for the Athapascan of the Mackenzie River region. We shall therefore certainly be on the alert for evidence of former exogamy where the kinship system is exogamous, but we shall not accept the system as proof of exogamy unless, as in the Cree instance, there are specific conditions to corroborate the conclusion. In the Arapaho case the conditions are not, in my opinion, of such a character. Here we have not a group of closely related tribes all of whom, with a single exception, possess an exogamous organization. The Arapaho and the Gros Ventre stand alone within the Algonkian family, and as already stated the Gros Ventre may have borrowed the gentile organization from the Black-foot. Under the circumstances I do not pretend to give a solution of the problem but content myself with enumerating various possibilities. It may be, as Tylor would argue, that the Arapaho-Gros Ventre originally had an exogamous organization still preserved by the Gros Ventre, of which the Arapaho kinship system is a survival. Or, the as yet undivided parent tribe lacked exogamy, but borrowed an exogamous terminology from some neighboring people. Or, the parent tribe had neither exogamous divisions nor an exogamous nomenclature, but the Gros Ventre adopted them from the Black-foot; and the Arapaho, in recent times, borrowed the Gros Ventre terminology. Or, the common terminology developed quite independently of exogamy,—to my mind the least acceptable hypothesis.

The two illustrations hitherto given of intensive comparison have been made on the basis, primarily, of linguistic affiliation. Important as such a classification must be when we are dealing, after all, with elements of speech, it is not always possible. This applies, for example, to California, where the degree of linguistic differentiation necessitates a different mode of grouping. Here we might ask, for instance, how the exogamous Miwok differ as regards kinship from their non-exogamous neighbors, such as the Maidu, Washo, or Yokuts. Similarly, in the Plains area, the system of the non-exogamous Kiowa would be of great interest for our present purpose. Again, the Pawnee seem to have an exogamous kinship system without exogamy. This *may* be a survival from one-time exogamy; but it may also be the result of borrowing, and a detailed

comparison of the Pawnee system with that of all the tribes with which the Pawnee have come in contact may determine its source of origin.

Only through such intensive studies of detail shall we obtain an insight into the workings of the exogamous principle in its effect on kinship terminology and in its relations to other principles that may check or nullify its influence.

As has already been suggested, exogamy may do more than produce the fusion of lineal and collateral lines; as among the Hano Tewa, Crow, and other tribes, it may override the generation principle. This possibility is admitted by Dr Rivers, who is, however, strongly inclined to explain the disregard of generations not by exogamy but by the practice of special forms of marriage. The special case of the father's sister's son being classed with the father is intelligible, we are told, if a man marries the wife or widow of his mother's brother, for thus he comes to occupy his maternal uncle's social status, and his uncle's children therefore regard him as their father.<sup>1</sup> This assumption has already been criticised from the point of view of logical method: on the principle that hypothetical causes shall not be multiplied unnecessarily I have argued that no special hypothesis should be advanced for minor variations of the classificatory system if the theory purporting to explain that system as a whole suffices to explain the variations. This argument does not of course refute the existence of special causes. How, then, can we be sure that it is the exogamous factor and not some such social usage as that suggested by Dr Rivers that determines the classification under discussion? In the first place, it should be noted that the neglect of generations among the Tewa, Hidatsa, and Crow is not limited to the person of the father's sister's child, but that a single term is applied to the father's sister and all her female descendants, immediate and through females, *ad infinitum*. Shall we construct successive hypotheses as to forms of marriage by which a man would become the son of his father's sister's daughter's daughter and her successive female descendants when all the facts are summed up by the plain statement that there is one word for a

---

<sup>1</sup> *Kinship and Social Organisation*, pp. 54, 28-31.

father's clanswoman? That the clan is indeed the determining factor, is indicated by the effect of eliminating it. Among the Crow, as soon as we pass out of the clan by taking the daughter of the father's sister's *son* rather than of the father's sister's daughter, the generation factor at once enters: my father's sister's son is indeed my father since he belongs to my father's clan, but his daughter belongs to her mother's clan, hence is related to me only genealogically as my "father's" daughter, hence is my *sister*, not my mother or aunt.<sup>1</sup>

The conclusion is corroborated by other evidence. If the rule of descent is changed from maternal to paternal, kinship nomenclature should not be affected provided it has been shaped by forms of marriage, which are substantially uniform throughout the Plains area. If, on the other hand, kinship nomenclature has been shaped by exogamy the change from matrilineal to patrilineal descent<sup>2</sup> must produce a change in the terminology since my father's sister's daughter no longer belongs to my father's exogamous division. Within the Siouan family, to which the matrilineal Crow and Hidatsa belong, there are also patrilineal tribes, of which the Omaha are the best known. Among the Omaha my father's sister's daughters are classed not with my father's sister but with my sister's children, while her husband is my brother-in-law. These facts seem to indicate the influence of the gentile factor, for my father's sister belongs to my gens and is therefore my gentile sister, although it must be noted that the Omaha distinguish the father's sister from the own sister. The Crow and Hidatsa with greater consistency class not only the mother's brother's children with the brother's children—which corresponds exactly to the Omaha usage, having regard to the given differences in descent—but also class the mother's brother with the elder brother. Thus, the change from the clan to the gens has eliminated the classification of the father's sister's children with the first ascending generation, and their classification with the

---

<sup>1</sup> The Crow address the father's sister as "mother," but refer to her non-vocatively as "aunt."

<sup>2</sup> This phrase is not to be taken as expressing the chronological order of events but simply the conditions of our *Gedankenexperiment* since we are passing from the consideration of a matrilineal to that of a patrilineal tribe.



first descending generation among the Omaha becomes intelligible through the gentile principle. But this principle may be proved to have been operative in a quite unexceptionable manner. The Omaha class the mother's brother's son and all his male descendants, immediate or through males, with the mother's brother. And again as soon as we pass out of the exogamous group, the terminology varies: my mother's brother's son's son is my mother's brother, but my mother's brother's *daughter's* son is my brother since the bond between him and me is no longer gentile but genealogical, through his mother, who is my "mother."<sup>1</sup> According to Morgan these characteristics obtain for all the southern Siouan tribes.<sup>2</sup> In other words, where the matrilineal Hidatsa and Crow Indians class in one category the father's sister and her female descendants, immediate and through females, the patrilineal Omaha, Oto, Kansa, and other southern Siouan tribes unite the mother's brother and his male descendants, immediate and through males, *ad infinitum*. Better proof could hardly be demanded for the theory that the disregard of generations is the result of the exogamous principle.<sup>3</sup>

Exogamy thus furnishes a sufficient explanation of the invasion of the generation principle as encountered in Melanesia and various North American tribes. The chief value of the theory that kinship classification has followed exogamous groupings lies, however, in another direction. It explains the remarkable resemblance between the terminologies of widely separated and quite distinct peoples without recourse to hypothetical historical connections. If we abandon Morgan's theory that the development of the family has been unilinear, with the main stages impressing their stamp on kinship nomenclature, how can we account for the far-reaching similarity between, say, the system of the Seneca of North America and that of the South Indian Tamil? So widespread a custom as exogamy is admirably fitted to explain the distribution of the lineal-

<sup>1</sup> J. O. Dorsey, "Omaha Sociology," *3d Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, p. 254; Morgan, *Systems*, pp. 335-336.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 178-179.

<sup>3</sup> In comparing the Choctaw with the Omaha system of kinship Dr Kohler has called attention to the influence of the rule of descent on nomenclature. See "Zur Urgeschichte der Ehe," *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft*, 1897, XII, pp. 187-353, esp., p. 303.

collateral category, and it seems eminently worth while to extend the verification of the Tylor-Rivers theory both extensively and intensively. Such a study will be far from exhausting the subject of kinship nomenclature. The merging of lineal and collateral relationships constitutes but one of a number of categories, the geographical distribution of each of which must be definitely ascertained. Moreover, we are sadly in need of the intensive investigation of particular systems, giving all the connotations of every term, and indicating by comparison with closely related systems how and why kinship nomenclature changes. A comparative study of all the Siouan, or all the Athapascan, or all the Southwestern systems would be of the greatest value in this respect. However, the connection between exogamy and the "classificatory" system often hinted at but never systematically examined before Dr Rivers's investigations in Oceania, constitutes even by itself a problem of great significance and its partial solution cannot help but to react on a study of other phases of the whole question of kinship terminology.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY  
NEW YORK CITY